

Non-technical Issues Panel

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Economic Development

- Renewable energy is a growth industry
- Legislators need to understand that renewable energy is a “high-tech” industry
- Hawaii is to the U.S., as Iceland is to Europe: the “beta test” location for the hydrogen economy.
 - Like Iceland, the Big Island has geothermal
 - Thanks to maturing wind technologies, the other islands will also have opportunities in the hydrogen economy
- Hawaii can't afford to continue importing petroleum
- Wind will play a big part in Hawaii's self-sufficiency and economic security

Legislative/Regulatory Issues

- Change in the regulatory and legislative area is slow. Some of the issues we discuss today are the same as in 1994 – and in 1984.
- Community values are not necessarily reflected in stockholder values.
- If communities own the power supply, it's easier to do the right thing.
- The Legislature and the PUC have the responsibility to make sure the laws and regulations reflect community values.

Legislative/Regulatory Issues

- Focusing on lowest short-term energy cost is missing the real cost – to ourselves, our society, and the future.
- Petroleum pass through
 - Utilities have no incentive to move away from oil; they pass through to others the risk (and cost) of petroleum
 - How can you say a thirty-year oil-fired plant is economical when cheap oil may not be available in 10 years? (or 1, if there's a war in the Middle East)
- We as citizens and industry professionals must work through the legislature to reform the PUC policies and get to the real solutions

Education, Outreach, and Public Awareness

- Government resists public input
- The public is sometimes apathetic
- Need forums for policy making that directly involve local citizens and affected communities
- Citizens need real authority in the planning process
- Need involvement of diverse views

Education, Outreach, and Public Awareness

- Don't produce more studies and recommendations.
- Do come up with specific actions and implement them.
- Need to keep decision-makers informed of advances in renewable energy and conservation.
- All stakeholders must be involved – it's a joint venture.

Education, Outreach, and Public Awareness

- Education is needed so that people will understand
 - the bigger picture
 - how much of our energy supply is in jeopardy
 - all technologies come at a cost
 - that there are always cost/benefits tradeoffs
- Look at what educational materials and examples are available from other locations. Many other areas are struggling with the same issues and tradeoffs.

If you want cold beer and the lights to come on in the future, get ready for wind